Quick links:

Purpose

The administration and moderation of a group doesn't end once you've created your group. Establishing an engaging, meaningful presence on the CLP Commons takes time and care.

Throughout this document you'll find potential strategic points dependent upon the type of group that you have. Please keep in mind that they might not all work for the type of group you are managing.

If you have additional ideas for strategic points, or if you'd like to share how you have successfully created an engaging group, please share it in the Commons group, Group Moderators, or email it to molly_russell@nps.gov.

Admins vs. Mods vs. Helpers

In the Group Workflow Document you identified others who would help you monitor your group. You selected them based on their expertise on your group's subject matter and their availability to regularly check in on the group. What you probably haven't thought of, however, is what specific role they would be given in your group management.

For the purposes of this document, I've identified three roles that these monitors can hold:

1. *Administrator* - Administrators have total control over the group. They have the ability to edit the group name, description, privacy settings, and membership. They are also able to edit individual topics and posts within the group.

2. *Moderators* - Moderators have control over individual topics and posts. If a post violates the [Commons Etiquette Standards](), or if provided feedback violates best practices, the moderator will be able to edit or delete the post.
3. *Helpers* - Helpers have no special designation within a Commons group, but they play an important role in creating an engaging environment. They create new topics and respond to existing topics regularly.

Identify Roles

Assigned roles within your group should resemble a pyramid - very few administrators, a few moderators, and several helpers.

Consider the following when assigning roles in your group:

- Administrators can edit all aspects of your group. Who would you trust in this role?
- Administrators are in it for the long haul.
- Administrators monitor, respond, and post within their group, but not to the extent of 'helpers.'
- Admins/moderators will respond to inquiries from helpers on how to handle certain posts.
- Moderators can edit all posts. Do you want standards (in addition to the [Etiquette Standards]()) that they should comply with?
- Moderators monitor, respond, and post within their group, but not to the extent of 'helpers.'
- Helpers are assigned to monitor, respond, and post within the group, but on a time-limited basis.
- Helpers can be assigned (through a google calendar entry) in one-week to one-month intervals, during which they will check in on your group every day to ensure your group stays engaging.
- Helpers should be well-versed in the topic of your group, allowing them to respond and post relevant, meaningful content.

Create a Schedule

Remembering to check in on your group can be difficult. Creating calendar entries can help you do this.

You should always have someone regularly checking on your group. Assign one or several helpers to do this on a time-limited basis through calendar invites. While helpers are

responsible for the day-to-day monitoring, remind yourself and other admins/moderators to check in on your group at least once a week.

Another consideration is when you'll post topics. Identify potential seeder topics (see below) and create new posts once a week.

Seed Activity

Activity is important, even if it is planned. If a person sees that there are no/few posts in your group they are less likely to post themselves. If a person sees that posts and questions go unresponded to, they will be less likely to post in your group in the future.

It is important in the beginning of your group's existence - or in the beginning of your group's reboot - to identify and post relevant topics. Send messages to your other admins/moderators/ and helpers to identify future potential posts, and have them post them! Then, have other admins/moderators/helpers respond to those posts.

To help you develop a plan for seeding activity please consider using this Planned Topics worksheet. Enter several potential topics into this worksheet to help you keep track of ideas, when they'll be posted, and who will do the posting.

Set Quality Controls

Are there policies or procedures that are important to reinforce in your group? Maybe there is other misinformation about your topic that you want to ensure don't bleed into your group? Quality controls - and making sure that they're enforced by your admins/moderators/helpers - will help you ensure that misinformation is corrected in a timely fashion.

You can begin to identify quality control points by identifying what general misinformation exists about your topic. Then, identify what the correct information actually is, and make sure that all of your admins/moderators/helpers are aware of if.

If you have a long list of misinformation that you want to nip in the bud, consider creating a google doc that documents the misinformation along with the proper information. Share it with everyone helping you control your group to ensure that you're all on the same page. Or, if possible, create a topic that documents the wrong information vs. right information to make sure that everyone in your group is on the same page.

If misinformation is posted in your group, consider handling it in a way similar to how we handle Commons Etiquette violations.

Supplement!

Remember to always drive engagement back to your group!

Do you have long within-group email chains about your groups topic? Ask that those within the email instead hold these conversations within the group. Doing this opens the conversation up to others who may otherwise not be on email chains, which in turn may enrich the conversation.

Are there webinars and/or conference calls to discuss content related to your group? Remind participants that they can continue the conversation in your group after the call/webinar has ended. If possible, post the webinar/call information within your group instead of sending email reminders. That way, folks will have to access your group to get the information, and thus gain exposure to the types of information being posted within it.

Has this document been helpful? Do you have follow up questions? Do you have any additional strategies that you'd like to share? Please post them in [Group Moderators](#)! Remember to login to the CLP before clicking on the link for the group.